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be said. But there is one phase of the subject of which it is well for us to remind ourselves. There is a serious moral danger often in a perfectly moral book. The constant appeal to the emotional nature of a young person cannot but have harmful results. This reading and rereading of love-stories arouses a morbid and unyouthful interest in sentimental subjects, breaks down the frank, wholesome comradeship between boys and girls, and builds up a tissue of foolish dreams which distort the serious realities of life. The emotional nature grows at the expense of the intellectual nature, instead of there being a balance of power.

Indeed, "souls are dangerous things to carry straight, through all the spilt saltpetre of the world." And the query is: How can we English teachers give moral balance to our students? How can we ward off or counteract, by our teaching, the moral harm that comes from trivial as well as from wicked books?

"Sublimest danger, over which none weeps,  
When any young, wayfaring soul goes forth  
Alone, unconscious of the perilous road,  
The day-sun dazzling in his limpid eyes,  
To thrust his own way, he an alien,  
Through the world of books."

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#### "DIE NEUEREN SPRACHEN"<sup>1</sup>

ZEITSCHRIFT FÜR DEN NEUSPRACHLICHEN UNTERRICHT. HERAUSGEGEBEN VON  
WILHELM VIËTOR. MARBURG IN HESSEN: N. G. ELWERT 'SCHE VERLAGS-  
BUCHHANDLUNG; NEW YORK: GUSTAV E. STECHERT, 9 E. SIXTEENTH STREET.

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*Die neueren Sprachen* (price, 12 marks) is a monthly journal devoted chiefly to the interests of the reform movement in modern language instruction. This year's numbers contain among other articles: proceedings of the national and international meetings of the various associations of teachers of modern languages; announcements and discussions of the annual vacation courses for foreign students in Germany, France, England, and other countries; international correspondence of pupils; preparation of teachers of modern languages at home and abroad; the German schools reviewed from the standpoint of the foreigner; English and French recitals and addresses by foreign professors established especially for the

<sup>1</sup> Read at the conference of the Germanic Department.

benefit of foreign-language classes in schools; reports on school dramatics in the foreign tongue; reviews of new modern-language schoolbooks; graded lists of English and French texts for the reading in the different classes; explanations of new English and French terms; pages devoted to the interpretation of difficult passages from foreign classics; scientific articles, especially on phonetics; etc.

In accordance with the chief object of *Die neueren Sprachen*, to be a mouth-piece for the newer tendencies in modern-language instruction, I will this afternoon present an abstract of an article by Professor Dr. Münch, written in answer to the following official inquiry by the Prussian government: "What progress has been made during the last decade of the nineteenth century in the teaching of modern languages in the German secondary schools and universities, and what further changes would seem desirable?"

#### I. THE DEVELOPMENT SINCE 1890

A. *Official actions of the state authorities.*—1. By official regulation affecting the school curricula and examinations of admission to the universities the modern language instruction in the secondary schools has been radically changed in the following points:

a) Frequent exercises in the practical, especially in the oral, use of the foreign languages have been introduced into all the schools. Practice in speaking the foreign tongue begins in the first year, must never be lost sight of in any class exercise, and is continued through all the stages of instruction.

b) All final examinations, except those of the *Gymnasia*, still require the foreign essay. The preparation for the same has, however, been made more rational: short written reproductions, modifications, abstracts, and amplifications of stories read or heard in class, even in the lower grades; writing letters and other exercises in independent expression in the foreign idiom. The *Oberrealschulen* treat technological subjects in the same way.

c) The reading, in which modern prose must predominate, is selected to include a portrayal of the manners, customs, and intellectual life of the foreign nation.

d) English is introduced as an optional subject into the three highest classes of the *Gymnasia*, while the instruction in French in all schools with a Latin curriculum has remained the same in amount, but begins in Quarta instead of in Quinta.

2. The above changes in the curricula have brought about an increased attendance in schools emphasizing the modern languages, which has led to an increase of such schools.

3. To give the teachers better opportunities to increase their speaking knowledge of their subject, annual vacation schools have been opened at Berlin, Frankfurt-on-the-Main, Bonn, Göttingen, Greifswald, and Marburg.

4. The modern-language instruction in the secondary schools is now almost entirely in the hands of specialists; a longer stay abroad is more and more considered a necessary prerequisite for securing positions.

5. To enable teachers to visit France or England, traveling scholarships (1,000 marks) and leaves of absence (six months) are given by the government.

6. The new regulations for teachers' examinations do not insist on historic knowledge solely, but also on acquaintance with the present literature and civilization of the foreign nation, and on the ability to speak and write.

B. *Activity within the teaching staff.*—1. The movement for reform of the modern-language instruction which started about 1880 received a powerful impetus by this official sanction of some of its claims. The bibliography of its rousing literature had by 1893 filled a whole volume: Hermann Breymann, *Die neu sprachliche Reform-Literatur von 1876-1893*. (Leipzig: Georg Böhme, 1895) In spite of a natural reaction and a split in their own camp, the reformers have gained an ascendancy over the old, the grammar or translation method.

2. A wealth of valuable and most varied teaching material has been produced to help in the realization of the new ideals of instruction.

3. The results of phonetic investigations carried on in the laboratories of the universities are being utilized in the schoolrooms.

4. The same movement, on the other hand, compels the universities henceforth to provide not only for the scientific, but also for the practical, preparation of future language teachers.

5. The growth of the numerous modern language-associations is rapidly increasing all over the country. Their proceedings and publications bear testimony to the high intellectual life of our German colleagues.

6. It grows more and more common that even experienced teachers go abroad convinced that keeping in touch with the life of the foreign nation is essential to effective work. Among the pedagogues especially enthusiastic and successful in the application of the new ideas, Director Walter, of the Reformgymnasium in Frankfurt-on-the-Main, perhaps deserves the first place.

C. *Some defects of the old system not yet abolished, and imperfections of the new.*

The former are due to the fact that the prescribed new curriculum is a compromise between the conservative grammar method and the radical wing of the reform party as represented by Professor Viëtor and *Die neueren Sprachen*. As most striking deficiencies may here be quoted:

1. The retention of the translation into the foreign language as a test in the final examinations, which is incompatible with the ideas of progressive teaching.

2. Opportunities which the university offers the student for perfecting himself in the spoken language and for entering into the modern life of the foreign nation, though improved, are still inadequate.

The newness of the reform movement is not alone responsible for the lack of perfection in the present method of teaching. It stands to reason that details could not yet have been fully and thoroughly worked out. A more serious danger arises from these two postulates of the reformers:

1. Imparting of a speaking ability. By inducing a teacher to neglect the

more important and substantial features of language work it may fail to give intellectual culture.

2. Familiarity with the foreign civilization. This field, so vast and complex, may easily lead either to superficiality or to too severe a strain upon the teacher.

## II. FURTHER CHANGES ADVOCATED BY PROFESSOR MÜNCH

The recommendations made refer chiefly to the work at the German universities, and so are of less interest to us here. The suggestion for the secondary schools are changes of administration, not of principle. For instance, he pleads for a reduction to eighteen or sixteen in the number of weekly lessons to be given by a teacher of modern languages. Some of his proposals have been accepted in the newest regulations of the Prussian government, the study of which I recommend to the teachers of German in this country. They are: *Lehrpläne und Lehraufgaben für die höheren Schulen in Preussen*, *Ordnung der Reifeprüfung an den neunstufigen höheren Schulen in Preussen*, and *Prüfungs-Ordnung für die Kandidaten des höheren Lehramts in Preussen*—all published in Halle, 1901 (Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses).

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## ZEITSCHRIFT DES ALLGEMEINEN DEUTSCHEN SPRACHVEREINS

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The journal entitled *Zeitschrift des Allgemeinen Deutschen Sprachvereins* is the organ of a society of the same name whose aims are the cultivation of the German language, its purification from foreign words, and the awakening of a broader national spirit.

Luther had given to the world his glorious achievement, the translation of the Bible, in pure, forcible German, intelligible to High and Low; but the standard set by him had not been maintained. Language suffered by too generous importation of words from other countries. Centuries have passed, but the tendency of the Germans for mixing up their mother-tongue with foreign expressions has not abated.

Since the national regeneration which the foundation of the empire brought about, there is a natural reaction against this excessive admiration for all things foreign, a revival of public spirit, a healthful agitation to lift upward, to drive onward. A great number of foreign words of an earlier introduction which have taken root in the German language have undergone a transforming process and are so closely interwoven with it that their retention is a necessity. These incorporated words—in German *Lehnwörter*—must be retained while the modern foreign words of later date are superfluous and must be abolished.

How is the improved German to become the common property of the people? Everything in language depends on analogy and habit. The formation of habit